

CLAIMS

1. An information-processing system comprising:
a terminal operated by a user;
a first main apparatus for providing a resource;
a second main apparatus for storing personal
information of said user; and
a value apparatus for managing electronic values;
wherein;
said terminal comprises:
resource-request signal sender means for
transmitting a signal making a request for a resource
provided by said first main apparatus to said second main
apparatus; and
first utilization-right acquisition means for
acquiring a right to utilize a resource provided by said
first main apparatus from said second main apparatus; and
said terminal shows said right to utilize a
resource provided by said first main apparatus to said
first main apparatus before using said resource;
said first main apparatus comprises:
payment-notification receiver means for receiving
a payment notification from said value apparatus as a
notification informing said first main apparatus that an
electronic value representing a price to utilize a

resource has been paid from said second main apparatus as an electronic-value payment to said first main apparatus; and

utilization-right issuance means for issuing a right to utilize a resource to said second main apparatus in accordance with said payment notification; and

said first main apparatus allows said terminal to utilize a resource provided by said first main apparatus when said terminal shows a right to utilize said resource;

said second main apparatus comprises:

electronic-value payment request means for requesting said value apparatus to make an electronic-value payment for an electronic value to said first main apparatus in accordance with a signal received from said terminal as a signal making a request for a resource;

second utilization-right acquisition means for acquiring a utilization right, which is issued by said first main apparatus as a right to utilize a resource, in accordance with an electronic-value payment; and

utilization-right presentation means for providing a utilization right acquired by said second utilization-right acquisition means as a right to utilize a resource to said terminal; and

said value apparatus comprises:

electronic-value payment means for making an electronic-value payment to said first main apparatus in accordance with a request received from said second main apparatus; and

payment-notification sender means for transmitting a payment notification to said first main apparatus to notify said first main apparatus of said electronic-value payment.

2. An information-processing apparatus operated by a user, said apparatus comprising:

resource-request signal sender means for transmitting a signal making a request for a resource provided by a first main apparatus, which is used for providing said resource, to a second main apparatus for storing personal information of said user; and

utilization-right acquisition means for acquiring a right to utilize a resource provided by said first main apparatus from said second main apparatus, wherein

said right to utilize a resource is shown to said first main apparatus before said resource provided by said first main apparatus can be utilized.

3. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 2, further including authentication

means for authenticating said user in conjunction with said second main apparatus as a valid user corresponding to personal information stored in said second main apparatus.

4. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 2 wherein said resource-request signal sender means and said utilization-right acquisition means exchange information with said second main apparatus through said first main apparatus.

5. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 2 wherein said resource-request signal sender means and said utilization-right acquisition means exchange data with said second main apparatus by encrypting said data.

6. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 2 wherein said resource is an apparatus, information, or a license issued for information.

7. An information-processing method adopted by an information-processing apparatus operated by a user, said method comprising the steps of:

transmitting a signal making a request for a resource provided by a first main apparatus, which is used for providing said resource to said information-

processing apparatus, to a second main apparatus for storing personal information of said user; and

acquiring a right to utilize a resource provided by said first main apparatus from said second main apparatus; wherein

said right to utilize a resource is shown to said first main apparatus before said resource provided by said first main apparatus can be utilized.

8. A program to be executed by an information-processing apparatus operated by a user, said program comprising the steps of:

transmitting a signal making a request for a resource provided by a first main apparatus, which is used for providing said resource, to a second main apparatus for storing personal information of said user; and

acquiring a right to utilize a resource provided by said first main apparatus from said second main apparatus; wherein

said right to utilize a resource provided by said first main apparatus is shown to said first main apparatus before said resource provided by said first main apparatus can be utilized.

9. An information-processing apparatus for

providing a resource to a terminal operated by a user,
said apparatus comprising:

payment-notification receiver means for receiving
a payment notification from a value apparatus for
managing electronic values as a notification informing
said information-processing apparatus that an electronic
value representing a price to utilize a resource has been
paid from a main apparatus for storing personal
information of said user as an electronic-value payment
to said information-processing apparatus; and

utilization-right issuance means for issuing a
right to utilize a resource provided by said information-
processing apparatus to said main apparatus in accordance
with said payment notification; wherein

a terminal is allowed to utilize a resource
provided by said information-processing apparatus if said
terminal shows a right obtained from said main apparatus
to said information-processing apparatus.

10. The information-processing apparatus
according to claim 9, further including authentication
means for authenticating said value apparatus in
conjunction with said value apparatus as a valid
apparatus authorized to manage said electronic value.

11. The information-processing apparatus

according to claim 9, further including other authentication means for authenticating said payment notification as a valid notification.

12. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 9 wherein said resource can be an apparatus, information, or a license issued for information.

13. An information-processing method adopted by an information-processing apparatus for providing a resource to a terminal operated by a user, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving a payment notification from a value apparatus for managing electronic values as a notification informing said information-processing apparatus that an electronic value representing a price to utilize a resource has been paid from a main apparatus for storing personal information of said user as an electronic-value payment to said information-processing apparatus; and

issuing a right to utilize a resource provided by said information-processing apparatus to said main apparatus in accordance with said payment notification; wherein

a terminal is allowed to utilize a resource

provided by said information-processing apparatus if said terminal shows a right obtained from said main apparatus to said information-processing apparatus.

14. A program to be executed by an information-processing apparatus for providing a resource to a terminal operated by a user, said program comprising the steps of:

receiving a payment notification from a value apparatus for managing electronic values as a notification informing said information-processing apparatus that an electronic value representing a price to utilize a resource has been paid from a main apparatus for storing personal information of said user as an electronic-value payment to said information-processing apparatus; and

issuing a right to utilize a resource provided by said information-processing apparatus to said main apparatus in accordance with said payment notification; wherein

a terminal is allowed to utilize a resource provided by said information-processing apparatus if said terminal shows a right obtained from said main apparatus to said information-processing apparatus.

15. An information-processing apparatus for

storing personal information of a user operating a terminal, said apparatus comprising:

electronic-value payment request means for requesting a value apparatus for managing electronic values to make an electronic-value payment, which is a payment for an electronic value representing a price to provide a resource from a main apparatus for providing said resource to said terminal, to said main apparatus in accordance with a request made by said terminal;

utilization-right acquisition means for acquiring a utilization right, which is issued by said main apparatus as a right to utilize a resource provided by said main apparatus, in accordance with an electronic-value payment; and

utilization-right presentation means for providing a utilization right acquired by said utilization-right acquisition means as a right to utilize a resource to said terminal.

16. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 15, further including authentication means for authenticating said value apparatus in conjunction with said value apparatus as a valid apparatus authorized to manage said electronic value.

17. The information-processing apparatus

according to claim 15, further including other authentication means for authenticating said user in conjunction with said terminal as a valid user corresponding to said personal information.

18. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 15 wherein said resource can be an apparatus, information, or a license issued for information.

19. An information-processing method adopted by an information-processing apparatus for storing personal information of a user operating a terminal, said method comprising the steps of:

requesting a value apparatus for managing electronic values to make an electronic-value payment, which is a payment for an electronic value representing a price to provide a resource from a main apparatus for providing said resource to said terminal, to said main apparatus in accordance with a request made by said terminal;

acquiring a utilization right, which is issued by said main apparatus as a right to utilize a resource provided by said main apparatus, in accordance with an electronic-value payment; and

providing a utilization right acquired in a

process carried out at said utilization-right acquisition step as a right to utilize a resource to said terminal.

20. A program to be executed by an information-processing apparatus for storing personal information of a user operating a terminal, said program comprising the steps of:

requesting a value apparatus for managing electronic values to make an electronic-value payment, which is a payment for an electronic value representing a price to provide a resource from a main apparatus for providing said resource to said terminal, to said main apparatus in accordance with a request made by said terminal;

acquiring a utilization right, which is issued by said main apparatus as a right to utilize a resource provided by said main apparatus, in accordance with an electronic-value payment; and

providing a utilization right acquired in a process carried out at said utilization-right acquisition step as a right to utilize a resource to said terminal.

21. An information-processing apparatus for managing electronic values, said apparatus comprising:

electronic-value payment means for making an electronic-value payment to a first main apparatus for

providing a resource to a terminal operated by a user as a payment, which is made for a price to provide said resource from said first main apparatus to said terminal, in accordance with a request made by a second main apparatus for storing personal information of said user; and

payment-notification sender means for transmitting a payment notification to said first main apparatus to notify said first main apparatus of said electronic-value payment made to said first main apparatus from said second main apparatus.

22. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 21, further including authentication means for authenticating said information-processing apparatus itself in conjunction with said first and second main apparatus as a valid apparatus for managing said electronic values.

23. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 21, further including storage means for storing electronic values of said first and second main apparatus, wherein said electronic-value payment means makes an electronic-value payment from said second main apparatus to said first main apparatus by renewing electronic values stored in said storage means.

24. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 21 wherein said electronic-value payment means is also capable of making an electronic-value payment from said second main apparatus to said first main apparatus by acquiring an electronic value from said second main apparatus and transferring said acquired electronic value to said first main apparatus.

25. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 21 wherein said resource can be an apparatus, information, or a license issued for information.

26. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 21 wherein said electronic values are each managed in the form of an account managed by using an apparatus ID included in a certificate of each of said main apparatus or by using an ID associated with said apparatus ID.

27. An information-processing method adopted by an information-processing apparatus for managing electronic values, said method comprising the steps of:

making an electronic-value payment to a first main apparatus for providing a resource to a terminal operated by a user as a payment, which is made for a price to provide said resource from said first main

apparatus to said terminal, in accordance with a request made by a second main apparatus for storing personal information of said user; and

transmitting a payment notification to said first main apparatus to notify said first main apparatus of said electronic-value payment made to said first main apparatus from said second main apparatus.

28. A program to be executed by an information-processing apparatus for managing electronic values, said program comprising the steps of:

making an electronic-value payment to a first main apparatus for providing a resource to a terminal operated by a user as a payment, which is made for a price to provide said resource from said first main apparatus to said terminal, in accordance with a request made by a second main apparatus for storing personal information of said user; and

transmitting a payment notification to said first main apparatus to notify said first main apparatus of said electronic-value payment made to said first main apparatus from said second main apparatus.